

*St. Paul's Church*  
*of the United Church of Christ*



**"The Light" Newsletter**  
**December 2017/January 2018 Edition**

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# From the Interim

## Prayer in the Days Before Advent

My brother, Jesus. It happens every year. I think that this will be the year that I have a reflective Advent.

I look forward to Sunday and this new season, Jesus. But all around me are the signs rushing me to Christmas and some kind of celebration that equates spending with love.

I need your help. I want to slow my world down. This year, more than ever, I need Advent, these weeks of reflection and longing for hope in the darkness.

Jesus, this year, help me to have that longing. Help me to feel it in my heart and be aware of the hunger and thirst in my own soul. Deep down, I know there is something missing in my life, but I can't quite reach for it. I can't get what is missing.

I know it is about you, Jesus. You are not missing from my life, but I might be missing the awareness of all of the places you are present there. Be with me, my dear friend. Guide me in these weeks to what you want to show me this Advent. Help me to be vulnerable enough to ask you to lead me to the place of my own weakness, the very place where I will find you the most deeply embedded in my heart, loving me without limits.

## Advent 2017 theme

As I child I could not wait for the Sears and JC Penny's Christmas catalog would arrive. I would scan through the toys section to figure out what I wanted to put on my gift list. Which had to be presented to my mom as we sat for thanksgiving meal. As I grow older the list became shorter and yes, the cost of the item sure did go up. So, may I suggest that we think about not just what we want this year and maybe look at what do we need. This year theme is **The Gifts you need**. We will look at Hope, Peace, Joy and Love and might discover we may need these than any item purchased.

Remember that I will be reading a children's book during the weekly advent services. I will share my favorite of them *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey* by Susan Wojciechowski.

Dec 13 – a Blue Christmas service

A quite service of reflection for people who are struggling the “holiday cheer” – a time to grieve and remember.

I want to share this article written by Dr. Molly Marshall- may it be something to think about in this coming new year - **A spiritual performance review**

MOLLY T. MARSHALL | JUNE 13, 2017



It's time for performance reviews in my school. The provost reviews the faculty and academic staff; I review the leadership team and my executive assistant; and other leaders review the work of their teams. We have sent out questions and surveys, all for enhancing institutional effectiveness and individual personal development.

A good performance review should not strike terror in the heart of the one being reviewed — or the reviewer. The most hopeful outcome is that improvement will occur through a careful assessment of accomplishments, priorities and strategic goals that promote the seminary's mission.

As I have deliberated on my approach to these reviews (the board reviews me, too), I have wondered about what kind of spiritual performance review God might administer. We do have

some clues in Scripture, and these beckon our reflection. Certain traits of character and action are pleasing to God, as these biblical forebears demonstrate.

**Trusting God.** Abraham and Sarah are the venerable forebears whose trust in God is “reckoned as righteousness.” It was not a straight journey to be sure. There was the “sister Sarah” episode in Egypt and the oppression of Hagar as the trust of each flagged. Yet, by faith they conceived and lived into a covenant that charted a future with God, for the sake of all the nations.

**Speaking truth to power.** For a fellow unsure of his capacity to speak clearly, Moses surely was forthright with Pharaoh about God’s liberating purpose for those enslaved. He demanded that Israelites be set free — and compensated for their labor, to boot. An admixture of impatience and wisdom, this great leader spoke with God as a friend speaks to a friend, sometimes rather bluntly.

**Displaying courage.** Far from docile or acquiescent, Deborah may be the original Wonder Woman. Judge, prophet and military strategist, she accompanied Barak into battle against Israel’s enemies. Indeed, he said he would not go if she did not; and Deborah “arose as a mother in Israel,” and led her people to victory. Along the way she reminds Barak that he would gain no glory, for God will place the opposing general, Sisera, into the hand of a woman, Jael.

**Offering consent to God’s plan.** A very young woman says “yes” to God’s invitation to become *Theotokos*, the God-bearer. She does not offer her consent without careful interrogation of the angelic messenger, for she understands some of the public

humiliation this arrangement might provoke. Yet, she believes before she conceives, and generations have called her blessed. She models the truth as spoken by Augustine: “God will not save us without our consent.”

**Practicing generosity.** We do not know her name, only the size of the offering she brought. The Gospels of Mark and Luke recount how Jesus, while teaching in the temple, observed her sacrificial gift. He told his disciples that “this poor widow has put in more than all those contributing to the treasury.” What pledge form ever requests your “whole living” as the appropriate gift? She gave all she had, Jesus observed.

**Serving others.** Dorcas, or Tabitha, “was devoted to good works and acts of charity.” She uniquely carries the designation *mathetria* (woman disciple), and her ministry opens the way to the conversion of many. I find the accent on her many good works interesting. Protestants have been quite fearful of compromising the power of grace with any concomitant emphasis on works. Yet, the story of Tabitha makes her concrete labor for others the centerpiece of her life, lost and then restored.

**Rightly dividing the word of truth.** Pastoral advice for the young leader includes: “Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved ... a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” While pastors have the relentless task of preaching sermons, every Christian has freedom of biblical interpretation, and as Baptists we treasure the liberty of conscience we have to engage texts afresh. In our

time, fresh interpretations that convey inclusion can refresh our congregations.

**Discerning the ways of God.** The Seer who pens the Apocalypse charts (not as a dispensationalist!) the consummation toward which the long narrative of the Bible points. Not only does he read his current epoch, in all its persecution and violence, with discernment; he also articulates the centrality of Jesus for God's redemptive work for all the ages. John writes what he believes God has given him, and he seeks to be a faithful witness to the ways of God.

Thankfully, God views us through the grace of "being clothed with Christ" and "filled with the Spirit," without dispensing the expectation that we will live as persons being changed from one degree of glory to another. Hopefully, this review of our performance as Christians will encourage our perseverance even as we rely on God's mercy.

## **CHURCH TIDBITS**



### **December 10 – Christmas Caroling**

**Join us for some warm and hearty soups before venturing out to sing some Christmas Carols and deliver cards and gifts to some of our shut-ins. Dinner starts at 4:00 and we will leave for caroling around 4:45.**

**Dec. 13** – a Blue Christmas service – A quite service of reflection for people who are struggling the “holiday cheer” – a time to grieve and remember.

**Dec. 17** – Annual Congregational Meeting

If you are a committee chairperson and haven’t turned in your annual report, please do so as soon as possible.

**Dec. 17** – White Gift Sunday & Choir Cantata

Care Team will be collecting Christmas Cards on Sundays December 3 and December 10 to be delivered to shut ins and residents at Care Facilities during our Christmas Caroling. Please feel free to bring cards for Arlene Vogt-Wagner, Helen Mason, Teddy Fausz, Betty Lou Pfeiffer, and cards for other non-member residents in the facilities who may be there on December 10th! THANK YOU ~ ST. PAUL'S CARE TEAM

**To my church family,**

**Thank you for the cards, emails and phone calls during my recent surgeries and hospital stay. It is a comfort to know we have so many caring people at St. Pauls.**

**Jim Webb**



**DECEMBER**  
**Birthdays and Anniversaries**

- |                            |                                       |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>1 Cameron McDonald</b>  | <b>7 Fred &amp; Lilla Losey</b>       |
| <b>1 Jessica McDonald</b>  | <b>48 years</b>                       |
| <b>1 Kayla McDonald</b>    |                                       |
| <b>4 Susan Voelker</b>     | <b>19 Roger &amp; Kathy VonStrohe</b> |
| <b>5 Shawn Hayslette</b>   | <b>48 years</b>                       |
| <b>8 Gary Sperry</b>       |                                       |
| <b>8 Tom Wheeler</b>       |                                       |
| <b>9 Craig McAlpin</b>     |                                       |
| <b>9 Amanda Pohlman</b>    |                                       |
| <b>9 Sandy Smith</b>       |                                       |
| <b>10 Jennifer Vogt</b>    |                                       |
| <b>12 Josh Nelson</b>      |                                       |
| <b>15 Curtis McNichols</b> |                                       |
| <b>17 Fay Racke</b>        |                                       |
| <b>21 Wanda Hornsby</b>    |                                       |
| <b>23 Samuel Edington</b>  |                                       |
| <b>24 Benjamin Dietz</b>   |                                       |
| <b>29 Jackie Poynter</b>   |                                       |





**JANUARY**  
**Birthdays and Anniversaries**

<b>3 David Buecker</b>	<b>14 Ken &amp; Fay Racke</b>
<b>5 Margie Stormer</b>	<b>31 years</b>
<b>6 Kevin Chalk</b>	
<b>6 Julie Enyart</b>	<b>17 Tim &amp; Linda Velten</b>
<b>6 Ginny Lickert Combs</b>	<b>25 years</b>
<b>10 Kenneth Voelker</b>	
<b>11 Brenda Nelson</b>	<b>22 Michael &amp; Amanda Pohlman</b>
<b>13 Carol Valerius</b>	<b>8 years</b>
<b>15 Jackie Baker</b>	
<b>18 Emma Croxson</b>	
<b>18 James Santee</b>	
<b>19 Roger Windgassen</b>	
<b>22 Ruth Beck</b>	
<b>22 Todd Pfeiffer</b>	
<b>22 Roland Wright</b>	
<b>23 Jim Thomas</b>	
<b>24 Becky Horn</b>	
<b>25 Brandon Coplen</b>	
<b>25 Ava Christine Winstel</b>	
<b>26 Matthew Losey</b>	
<b>26 Andrew Saunders</b>	
<b>28 Annette Boehm</b>	
<b>29 Zachary Dietz</b>	
<b>30 Ann Windgassen</b>	
<b>31 Houston Hall</b>	



## THOSE WHO SERVE IN DECEMBER

### Liturgist

Dec. 10 Marion Gosney  
17 Karey Thomas  
24 Debbie Fowee  
5:00 pm – Amity Kukla  
31 Roger VonStrohe

### Coffee

Dec. 10 D. Yeager & J. Baker  
17 Beekee & Shawn H.  
24 Tim Ash  
31 D. Yeager & J. Baker

### Acolyte

Dec. 10 Greyson Ballinger  
17 Logan Hayslette  
24 10:30 am Greyson Ballinger  
5:00 pm Shae Weinel  
31 Logan Hayslette

### Ushers:

Dec. 10 10:30 Debbie Fowee and Sue Hatfield  
Dec. 17 10:30 Rick Carr and Lee Walz  
Dec. 24 10:30 Marion & Dorothy Gosney  
5:00 Gary Sperry and Ron Sperry  
Dec. 31 10:30 Pat Schuchter and Shawn Hayslette

**IF YOU CANNOT MAKE YOUR ASSIGNED DATE, PLEASE  
TRADE WITH SOMEONE ELSE AND LET THE CHURCH OFFICE  
KNOW.**

## **THOSE WHO SERVE IN JANUARY**

### **Liturgist**

**Jan. 7 Karey Thomas  
14 Marion Gosney  
21 Debbie Fowee  
28 Amity Kukla**

### **Coffee**

**Jan. 7 Beekee & Shawn H.  
14 Tim Ash  
21 D. Yeager & J. Baker  
28 Tim Ash**

### **Acolyte**

**Jan. 7 Shae Weinel  
14 Greyson Ballinger  
21 Shae Weinel  
28 Greyson Ballinger**

**Communion Set-up: Jan. 7 – Mindy Connell and Audrey Thomas**

### **Ushers:**

**Jan. 7 10:30 Asbury Turner, Jim Miller,  
Debbie Fowee and Rick Carr**

**Jan. 14 10:30 Cameron McDonald and Leah McDonald**

**Jan. 21 10:30 Marion & Dorothy Gosney**

**Jan. 28 10:30 Lee Walz and Pat Schuchter**

**IF YOU CANNOT MAKE YOUR ASSIGNED DATE, PLEASE  
TRADE WITH SOMEONE ELSE AND LET THE CHURCH OFFICE  
KNOW.**

St. Paul's Work Day with HONK 11/18/2017...Daryl & Teresa joined Ft. Thomas First Presbyterian Church to remove an old furnace and paint. Watch for upcoming opportunities to join us quarterly in 2018!



## WHITE GIFT PROGRAM 2017

As most of you know, each year our church provides food and gifts to families for Christmas. Each family receives a letter of the alphabet and a symbol to identify them. These symbols are displayed on a front pew with the identifying letter, age, sex, sizes (when available), and toy suggestions on them. The symbols are to be attached to the bottom of the gift you purchase so that they may be removed by the family when they receive them and place their own bows, etc. on the gifts. Symbols will be available before and after church on November 26<sup>th</sup>, December 3<sup>th</sup>, and December 10<sup>th</sup>. If you need more symbols, please make your own in the same color and with the same information on them. After you select your symbols, PLEASE SIGN the notebook available showing which symbols you have selected. On December 17<sup>th</sup> bring your gifts for White Gift Sunday.

On December 21st at 9 am boxes of food and gifts will be assembled in the fellowship hall. We always need plenty of elves to accomplish this task. Contact Mindy Connell to help assemble the food boxes and Charlene Rogers to help check off gifts and sometimes wrap additional gifts.

God bless each of you for your part in this wonderful program. The families are so appreciative every year for all that we are able to provide for them.

Charlene Rogers and the Mission Committee



Thank you for supporting our "Mask Odor" collection during October! Thanks to your generosity we were able to send several boxes of products to the Fuel NKU campus pantry, helping disadvantaged students with much-needed supplies.  
~ Mission Committee

## But Whom Do You Say That I AM?

ETACOVDAEWH  
 RURETSAMFOG  
 AVRSUSEJLNO  
 WRETMWAYICL  
 VINYDAAKDDO  
 RATSGNINROM  
 DAYSTARCPTTSALDNATSRIFORERUNNER  
 EVGFNOPHHOTUJGROLESNUOCHCNARBO  
 NMPEIAGONOFUORHADUJFONOILIFEIT  
 EEMVMIMOSRSFKHORNJFOSALVATIONSA  
 RSAAHOFFETKEENDOGYTHGIMLAMENHI  
 ASSQNGDDOILANINOSNETTOGEBYLNOD  
 ZITJOUNNNNDECAEPFOECNIRPHYPLPE  
 AAEDYOEAGACORSTNENIVDIVADDFONOSM  
 NHRZWHS LQARS DPOCJTLAMBOFGODBVF  
 RHORATOUCIR  
 PHPOCSNDEGE  
 ELRLDRSGRHD  
 NDOFAEOERTE  
 TRPOINLVUHE  
 EEHDDRAESBM  
 RVEREOTRESE  
 EOTOLCILRHR  
 VSNLIKOA VET  
 I SGRVVNSAPS  
 GADAERBTNHI  
 WPSDRVSITER  
 AGSGEVONORH  
 LOWORDHGSDC  
 NOITADNUOIFY

Advocate  
 Almighty  
 Alpha and Omega  
 Amen  
 Apostle  
 Beloved Son  
 Bishop  
 Branch  
 Bread  
 Captain  
 Carpenter  
 Chosen  
 Christ  
 Consolation  
 Cornerstone  
 Counselor  
 Day Star  
 Deliverer

Door  
 Emmanuel  
 Everlasting  
 Faithful and True  
 First and Last  
 Forerunner  
 Foundation  
 Governor  
 Head  
 High Priest  
 Holy and Just One  
 Horn of Salvation  
 I AM  
 Jesus  
 Judge  
 King  
 King of Kings  
 Lamb of God

Lawgiver  
 Life  
 Light  
 Lion of Judah  
 Lord  
 Lord of Lords  
 Master  
 Master  
 Mediator  
 Messiah  
 Mighty God  
 Morning Star  
 Nazarene  
 Only Begotten Son  
 Passover  
 Priest  
 Prince of Peace  
 Prophet

Redeemer  
 Resurrection  
 Rock  
 Savior  
 Servant  
 Shepherd  
 Son of David  
 Son of God  
 Son of Man  
 Vine  
 Way  
 Wonderful  
 Word

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